

Dr. Peterson

Welcome: Council on Competitiveness: Exploring Innovation Frontiers Initiative

8 a.m. Tuesday, June 9, 2015, Global Learning Center 222

Thank you, Deborah [Wince-Smith]. We're glad to host this first Council on Competitiveness event in the series, along with Mike Cassidy, representing the Georgia Research Alliance and Hala Modellmog representing the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. We have all partnered on numerous initiatives through the years with great results, and this one holds great promise.

The idea of exploring innovation frontiers creates an air of excitement as together we explore almost limitless possibilities. For inspiration, we have to look no further than our venue for the day. We are in the middle of Tech Square, an area of Atlanta that just 12 years ago was a blighted area with underdeveloped real estate, vacant lots and barbed wire. It is now one of the leading innovation ecosystems in the Southeast, with the potential for national recognition. This five-block area is a unique complex of academic, retail and research space. Our Scheller College of Business is located in this part of our campus, as is EI2 and our Advanced Technology Development Center are here, working with startups and established corporations alike. If you make a trip to Starbucks down the street, it is likely you'll see students, startup CEOs and innovation center directors engaged in conversations about possibilities for collaboration and innovation.

Momentum is building, with large companies establishing innovation centers here to interact with the talent and expertise that exist at Georgia Tech in our students, faculty and staff. The latest additions include Southern Company, The Home Depot, Coca-Cola Enterprises, and Worldpay, along with AT&T Mobility and NCR.

Just across the street we're moving forward with a High Performance Computing Center that will support leading-edge research programs in computing and advanced big data analytics. Portman Holdings was selected as the developer, and it promises to

be a beautiful venue providing an interdisciplinary, collaborative environment for innovation that will enhance Tech Square's positive impact in Midtown Atlanta.

We're also committed to creating an innovative environment for our students. Through our curriculum and student competitions, we're working to instill entrepreneurial confidence in our graduates. Today you'll hear from three next generation innovators: Jasmine Burton, Rachel Ford, and Partha Unnava, and I'm sure that you'll find their stories inspirational.

Everyone here has a story to tell about innovation. The challenge before us is to learn from each other, to share best practices and ideas, and to look through the lens of innovation as we prepare to help design the future. As we explore the landscape of the national innovation system, we can begin to identify the keys to create, scale and sustain inclusive communities, to nurture new talent, and to create new markets and jobs, growing the economy while serving society.

And now it is my pleasure to welcome today's Innovation Keynote, Dr. France A. Córdova. As a member of the National Science Board, now in my second term, I have had the privilege to work with Dr. Cordova, and am delighted to welcome her back to Georgia Tech.

Nominated by President Obama and confirmed by the U.S. Senate in March 2014, France serves as the director of the National Science Foundation. Under her direction, the foundation's programs and initiatives keep the United States at the forefront of science and engineering – empowering future generations of scientists and engineers, and fostering U.S. prosperity and global leadership.

Her storied, nearly 30-year career in academia includes:

- President, Purdue University (first woman to hold the post),

- Chancellor and distinguished professor of physics and astronomy, University of California – Riverside,
- Vice chancellor for research and professor of physics at the University of California – Santa Barbara,
- Department head – Department of Astronomy and Astrophysics, Pennsylvania State University.

In addition, from 1993 to 1996, France served as NASA's chief scientist, becoming the first woman and youngest person to hold the title. During that time, she was awarded NASA's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Medal. France was also deputy group leader in the Earth and Space Sciences Division at Los Alamos National Laboratory from 1988 to 1989 and staff scientist from 1979 to 1989.

More recently, France served as chair of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution and on the board of trustees at the Mayo Clinic.

Her remarkable career is marked with achievements and commendations including:

- Kilby Laureate in 2000 for having made “significant contributions to society through science, technology, innovation, invention and education.”
- Elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences
- National Associate of the National Academies.
- Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the Association for Women in Science (AWIS).

Dr. Córdova is married to Christian J. Foster, a science educator, and they have two adult children. Please join me in welcoming my friend, Dr. France Córdova.

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Closing: Council on Competitiveness: Exploring Innovation Frontiers Initiative

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Thank you, Deborah [Wince-Smith]. Today's event has been invigorating. We've explored everything from sensing change to transformative models. We've taken a hard look at what was to foster an inclusive environment for innovation. We've been inspired by students and new graduates and we have worked to identify ways to accelerate the opportunities and overcome challenges.

As I reflect on the day, I can't help but think about our new Engineered Biosystems Building on campus. The facility on 10th street includes 200,000 square feet of multidisciplinary research space, and will serve as the focus for Georgia Tech's efforts to improve human health through an enhanced understanding of complex living systems. EBB has been designed as an interdisciplinary hub to foster collaboration that many times results in incredible breakthroughs. It is made possible by a partnership between Georgia Tech, the State of Georgia, and an investment from private donors, including business and industry. We expect it to be a resource to drive innovation resulting in the commercialization of new devices, drugs and technologies.

Tech Square, which I talked about this morning, is also an environment for innovation and collaboration. Our goal today was to provide a similar environment so that leaders from business and industry, laboratories, government and education could invest the time to explore new models of innovation. The Council on Competitiveness will take this rich feedback and combine it with that from future events to help shape next steps. In addition, I hope each of you have new ideas to take back with you. Thank you for sharing your expertise today, and for participating in this worthwhile effort.